

# Evidence for Home Visiting Programs to Reduce Intimate Partner Violence and related Health Disparities

Linda Bullock, PhD, RN, FAAN

Professor

University of Missouri

Sinclair School of Nursing

[lbullock@missouri.edu](mailto:lbullock@missouri.edu)

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# Points to Remember

- If intimate partner violence (IPV) is present during pregnancy and not addressed by the Home Visitor – maternal/child outcomes are not as good
- IPV is more common during pregnancy than many health problems screened for and impacts the health of mother and baby
- We know what an effective Home Visiting IPV intervention looks like: **DOVE**
- Decreasing childhood exposure can impact children's development and school readiness

# Prenatal Home Visiting Programs

- Recent research has shown that HV programs may not be as effective if IPV is occurring and not addressed<sup>1</sup>
  - Current HV'ing programs usually do not include a formal IPV protocol (e.g. Family Nurse Partnership, Parents as Teachers etc.)
- HV programs have reduced poor pregnancy outcomes, improved parenting skills and improved child development<sup>2</sup>
  - Education and support main ingredients of intervention

## EXAMPLE OF SUPPORT

*“I would say the entire situation, collaborative of shelter, home visitor, DOVE, talking about all of these issues and all of them intertwined together has helped me parent differently....”* (27-yr old, separated, woman, Dove study)

*“I think that, the support was the biggest thing when dealing with, you know, the problem about it.”* (22 yr old rural married woman, DOVE study)

<sup>1</sup>Eckenrode, J. et al. (2000). JAMA,284(11), 1385-1391.

<sup>2</sup>Chalk, R., & King, PA (1998). E.Violence in Families: Assessing Prevention and Treatment Programs. Washington DC: Academic Press

# Intimate Partner Violence and Pregnancy

- Incidence of IPV during pregnancy is between 4 – 8% or 156,00 to 332,000 women/year<sup>1</sup>
- 34% of the women in the Baby BEEP study were abused the year before and/or during pregnancy
- Abuse during pregnancy increases the risk of the women being murdered by her intimate partner 3-fold<sup>2</sup>

## WOMEN FEEL ISOLATED AND DO NOT TALK TO ANYONE

*“... when I first started this I just wanted to talk to somebody. And I made, and I knew that you’re confidential. I just wanted to tell somebody how I was feeling. ... You guys kept really giving me a lot of advice, but I mean, you make me feel like I wasn’t by myself anymore....” (24 yr old, rural, married woman, DOVE study)*

*... “(the study) made me realize how dangerous a situation I was in and how much worse it really was than I even realized. I knew it was a bad situation, but never realized it was that bad or how many different types of abuse I had experienced.” (27 yr old, rural, separated woman, DOVE study)*

<sup>1</sup>Gazmarian J.A. (2000). Maternal Child Health J. 4(2), 79-84.

<sup>2</sup>McFarlane, J. et al. (2002). Obstet Gynecol, 100 (1), 27-36.

# Health Effects of IPV during Pregnancy

## Associated with poor outcomes

- Unsafe sex practices/unplanned pregnancy
- Late entry into prenatal care
- Poor weight gain
- Placental abruption/uterine rupture/infections
- Increased substance abuse
- Mental Health issues – depression, anxiety and PTSD

<sup>1</sup> Coker, A.L. et al, (2000). Arch Fam Med, 9, 451-457.

# Health Effects for Infants whose Mothers are Abused

Most consistent evidence of IPV on fetus:

- Low Birth weight<sup>1,2</sup>
- Preterm delivery<sup>3</sup>
- Infant Mortality<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bullock, L., & McFarlane, J. (1989). *Am J. of Nursing*, 89(9), 1153-1155.

<sup>2</sup>Boy, A., & Salihu, H. (2004). *Int J. Fertil Womens Med.* 49 (4), 159-164.

<sup>3</sup>Mathews, T., & MacDorman, M. (2007). *National Vital Statistics Reports (Vol.55)*.

# Domestic Violence Enhanced Home Visitation Program (DOVE)

- **PURPOSE:** To test an empowerment intervention during pregnancy and immediately post-delivery to reduce IPV in rural and urban prenatal home visitation programs and in the NFP program.
- **WHAT IS DOVE:** The DOVE intervention is a highly-structured nurse-administered domestic violence home visitation program, designed to educate mothers and reduce their overall risk for violence during pregnancy and post-partum. It is being tested using home visitors in Missouri (rural) and Baltimore (urban)

# DOVE IPV Intervention: Evidence-based

- Dutton's Empowerment model <sup>1</sup>
  - Protection, a focus on increasing women's safety
  - Enhanced choice making and problem solving
- Parker and McFarlane 10-minute intervention<sup>2</sup>
  - Structured, brochure-based intervention
    - Flexible and can be implemented in different programs
    - Cycle of Violence
    - Risk factors for women and infants
    - Options (leaving, using shelter, accessing resources)

<sup>1</sup>Dutton MA. Empowering and healing the battered women. New York: Springer; 1992.

<sup>2</sup>Parker B, McFarlane J, et al. (1999). Research in Nursing & Health. 22:59-66.

# Lessons Learned about Implementing DOVE

- Preparation for the DOVE Study: The Town (Home Visitors) and Gown (Research team) Partnership
  - The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MoDHSS) extremely supportive of identifying IPV and working with the research team
  - Team conducted 5 different workshops regarding screening for IPV with the home visitors over a two-year period
  - Team continues to make frequent visits to the DOVE sites and goes over the research protocol with trained HVs and new staff

# ISSUES WITH HOME VISITORS

- Challenges of delivering DOVE intervention<sup>1</sup>
  - Many of the MO Home Visitors lacked educational preparation – Baltimore nurses part of research team
  - MO HVs had a lack of understanding of the importance of screening for intimate partner violence
  - Home visitors own experience with IPV
  
- TAKE HOME MESSAGE!

**TRAINING TRAINING TRAINING TRAINING TRAINING**

Eddy, T., Kilburn, E. et al., (2008). Nursing Clinics of North America, 43(3), 419-435.

# Important Findings: Baby BEEP for Kids and DOVE studies

- Research has shown exposure can cause lower cognitive functioning, limited problem solving and risk taking behavior
  - May be seeing these problems in Baby BEEP for Kids and DOVE women
    - Poor relationship with their own mothers
  - Also seeing:
    - Increased perinatal mortality
    - Increased health care utilization
    - Poor verbal skills at 2 years of age

**HOME VISITING MUST INCLUDE THE VERY YOUNG CHILDREN!**

